

CAB, 4th Inf. Div. inducts 'Father of MEDEVAC' into AAAA's Order of St. Michael

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One of the founding fathers of aerial medical evacuation operations was inducted into the Army Aviation Association of America's Order of St. Michael as Soldiers from the 4th Infantry Division's Combat Aviation Brigade witnessed the event at Hood Army Airfield May 22.

Retired Col. Joseph McNaney, a 23-year veteran who served as the commander of the 1st Cavalry Division's 15th Medical Battalion and as the division flight surgeon during a 12-month deployment to Vietnam in 1969-1970, was bestowed the order's bronze medallion by Maj. Gen. Jeffery Hammond, commanding general, 4th Inf. Div.

Col. Donald MacWillie, Combat Aviation Brigade commander, also honored the retired medical leader by tracing the CAB's Lone Star Dustoff Company's MEDEVAC lineage to McNaney and his battalion.

"He was a mentor of mine earlier in my career," MacWillie said, "and he continues to advise me today."

According to the association's induction criteria, McNaney was presented the bronze medallion for his conspicuous contributions to the Army's aviation community.

McNaney told the Soldiers of Companies C and D, 2nd Bn., 4th Avn. Regiment, about one of his missions in Vietnam. He saved the First Team's commanding general's life in a downed aircraft situation during the early stages of his deployment.

“He asked that I never tell anyone,” the retired aviator said, adding that it was too late to keep the secret – the word was on the loose by the time they landed in safety.

His experience in jungle combat is still helping modern Soldiers. Both MacWillie and Hammond touted the knowledge passed to them by McNaney.

Contemporary rules of combat have changed over time from when McNaney was an air ambulance pilot. An example of this is that present day air ambulances do not carry heavy weaponry in accordance with the Geneva Conventions.

“These new (medical evacuation) aircraft are bare,” he explained. “We had guns.”



St. Michael medal.

Maj. Gen. Jeffery Hammond, 4th Infantry Division commanding general, bestows the Order of St. Michael bronze medallion to Retired Col. Joseph McNaney, at the Company C, 2nd Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, maintenance hangar on Hood Army Airfield May 22.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Creighton Holub, CAB PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)



Aviation Soldiers shake hands

Spc. Nathan Bailey, a helicopter mechanic assigned to Company D, 2nd Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, shakes hands with Retired Col. Joseph McNaney, one of the founding fathers of helicopter medical evacuation, after McNaney was inducted into the Army Aviation Association of America's Order of St. Michael at the 2nd Bn., 4th Avn. Regt., Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, maintenance hangar on Hood Army Airfield May 22.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Creighton Holub, CAB PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)



4th Inf. Div. leadership with St. Michael awardee

Retired Col. Joseph McNaney stands with Col. Donald MacWillie (left), commander, Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, his wife, Sherri MacWillie, OJ McNaney, and Diane Hammond, along with her husband, Maj. Gen. Jeffery Hammond, commanding general, 4th Inf. Div., following McNaney's induction into the Army Aviation Association of America's Order of St. Michael. The induction ceremony was held on Hood Army Airfield May 22.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Creighton Holub, CAB PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)



CAB Soldier shows new MEDEVAC helicopter.

Sgt. Freddie Nunez, a crew chief assigned to Company C, 2nd Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, shows Retired Col. Joseph McNaney around a modern-day air ambulance May 22. McNaney was inducted into the Army Aviation Association of America's Order of St. Michael by Maj. Gen. Jeffery Hammond, the 4th Infantry Division's commanding general, at the Lone Star Dustoff Company's maintenance hangar on Hood Army Airfield.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Creighton Holub, CAB PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)

